

From: Logan
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/14/01 3:29pm
Subject: Anti-Trust

To Whom It May Concern,

Years spanned into decades as I formulated my own personal view of morality in this world. Years of experience and learning have come together to form the three basic principles by which I live. These principles may be best described as "truisms" because of their base nature, yet they remain effective in day to day use. They are:

"If it
ain't yours, don't touch it"
"Lead by example and others will follow"
"That which does
not kill us, makes us stronger" (her Friedrich Nietzsche)

In respect to the anti-trust case against Microsoft all of these truisms can be applied, and in all cases to less than satisfactory implications. First, a word about my true interest in this case.

Nearly seven years ago I had my first experiences with the internet. One of those experiences was with a burgeoning new technology known as Java. I downloaded an application that allowed one to create Java Applets for implementation on the web. This software was known as "Liquid Motion Pro." I was thrilled with the product as it allowed me as a creative designer to make things happen that were never before available to a "non-programmer." Three weeks after this initial download, a message was posted on the manufacturers site stating that they had been purchased by Microsoft and that further development would be implemented by that company. A new web address was given to view the progress of the product. Two weeks after that, the product was discontinued and trash-canned by Microsoft.

Since that time I have watched as dozens of innovative applications simply go away due to the influence of this all-devouring monster known as Microsoft. They have trashed, beaten on and devoured more innovation and innovative spirits than anything I've seen in my lifetime.

This breaches the first of my base tennets of living. If it ain't yours, don't touch it. Microsoft seems to understand this ideal, but from a strange sense of perspective. If they can't touch it, they find a way to make it their own, then they break it. If they can't break it, they make it so no one else can touch it. Example: Bungie Software at one time was the only major manufacturer of games for the Macintosh platform. They were to have released a ground breaking game called "Halo" for simultaneous release on Mac and WinTel. After having been purchased by Microsoft, they are only writing software for the proprietary Microsoft gaming system known as Xbox.

Lead by example and others will follow is supposed to be an inspirational slogan designed to motivate people to "do the right thing." Lead by example for Microsoft has led to the capture of the major share of processor market by Intel. A company which produces inferior products for the non-professional market(check the benchmark tests of Pentium-IV vs the DEC Alpha EV67 or the Athlon XP). A company which has forced everyone to conform to their standard of chip architecture. Not surprising is this company's close working relationship with Microsoft. (A secondary truism that may be used effectively here is "birds of a feather...")

That which does not kill us. Well, this only applies if we do not die in the trial. Many companies who have fought against this Goliath have died. Many more will continue to die by their hand. Some who see their comrades fall by their side decide simply not to fight. How many of these corpses on the field of battle does there need to be in order to see this company for what it is?

I am not a legal expert. I am a layman. And as a layman I have to gather information and make decisions to the best of my ability based on a few simple principles. I used to have faith in this country. I served in it's armed forces. Now I see the winds of change beginning to blow.

As I see it, in my own small way, the anti-trust laws were established to promote fairness in business practices - to create an environment of competition - in a free and open market. They were also designed to increase the technological innovations available to the public, thereby increasing the standard and quality of living for every citizen (not to mention the advancement of military capabilities).

What seems to be advancing is the idea that money makes might and might makes right. Through legal wrangling about the comments that a judge made about their company during the trial they wiggle their way into a legal impasse. Their defense was not "We're not guilty" their defense was "You didn't follow procedure." After a costly stalemate the monopolists simply turn around and say "we'll give you some money so you can fight your war and you make this all go away"

What appears to be huge amounts of money are about to be sloshed in the direction of the government. That is what the settlement is about. This is not about what is right or wrong, but about the size of the payoff. If it was about right or wrong, this case would have been taken to the Supreme Court and Microsoft would have been confirmed as guilty.

I begin to realize that soon I will be at my desk forced to stare at the incredibly inane flag of the conqueror as I start up my computer for the third time that day and repeat the mantra to myself "Resistance is futile, you will be assimilated", then wonder if I'll have enough money to pay to vote for president on the next election day.

Thank You,

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